

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Comments on City of Frederick Annexations

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Frederick Board of County Commissioners

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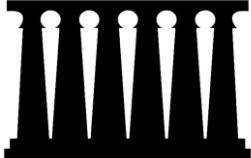
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Attached are several documents related to the recent northern annexations into the City of Frederick - Crumland Farms and Thatcher. Also attached are the approved annexation agreements/resolutions for Crumland Farms and the Thatcher properties, letters from the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue, a letter from the State Highway Administration (SHA), and letters from the Maryland Department of Planning. I would also note that the Town of Walkersville sent in a letter to the City of Frederick opposing the annexations, as did the County Commissioners.

Key points from the County perspective:

1. The Crumland Farm annexation agreement (see first attachment) is only six pages long, so it is not too much to read. Note that water and sewer are to be provided by the County. The County has no agreement with the City to provide sewer to this property.
2. The Crumland Farm Agreement, page 5, states, "....nothing herein shall obligate Petitioners (meaning the developer) to fund any portion of the US 15/Biggs Ford Road interchange." The County Commissioners and the State Highway Administration believe the developers, rather than the taxpayers, should pay for this interchange.

Please see the attached letter from the State Highway Administration (only two pages) which states the following: "Without the interchange, SHA has concerns over the ability of the existing road network to handle the projected traffic. As a result, SHA strongly recommends that the cost of planning, design, and construction of the interchange and park and ride lot be included in the requirements for the annexation to the City of Frederick."

The County Commissioners share the position of SHA.

3. The Crumland Farm Agreement in the same section allows the developers to limit the City Adequate Public Facilities traffic review to certain intersections.
4. The Crumland Farm Agreement allows the developer to proceed with 350 houses without any improvements to US 15.

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5. The Thatcher Agreement allows the developer to proceed to build 300,000 square feet of commercial property without any improvements to US 15 under the condition that a service road is built to Monocacy Boulevard, although there is no requirement that traffic use the service road.
6. The Division of Fire and Rescue provided input on May 5 and requested a three acre fire station site, noting that existing first due response is from Walkersville, which is a long distance, and first responders would be required to cross US 15. Due to accident rates, the Division of Fire and Rescue requests that no building be allowed to advance until the full interchange is constructed and open to traffic. The City agreements do not require dedication of land for a needed fire station and do not address other DFRS issues or concerns.
7. The County is concerned about school capacity. The existing site is served by an elementary school that is currently overcrowded and the County Capital Improvement Plan currently has no funding in the near term to address this situation. The City Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance for schools provides for a three-year wait then go, even if schools are overcrowded. Taxpayers will need to provide needed new school capacity. I have personally worked hard to address school overcrowding and it saddens me greatly to see actions that re-create or add to school overcrowding.

This is just a quick summary and does not highlight the entirety of the issues or concerns. I would invite you to read the agreements and decide what you think.

I would note that the recent letter from some City elected officials, paid for by the developers, does not mention these issues or the factual information related to them.